

Males of the 2 pheasants *A. argus* and *R. ocellata* make dancing grounds, large cleared spaces used for display, from which they call loudly and repeatedly. The similarity of their calls has been emphasized, for instance by Robinson & Chasen (1936); but detailed descriptions of the calls of *R. ocellata*, which are actually quite distinctive, have only been published since Rijkse's field work (Wells 1975, Davison 1978).

I visited Ketambe from 18 to 21 August 1978, when male *A. argus* were calling continually. In this period I covered the entire 1.5 km² area used by Rijkse (at an altitude from 350 to 500 m) as well as a further large area to the south extending to 1020 m altitude. Four dancing grounds between 350 and 500 m—the total in use within Rijkse's area—and a fifth at 600 m were examined. Feathers were found on each which belonged to male *A. argus*, and all the calls heard from the dancing grounds were of that species. Birds at a further 8 distant dancing grounds, on both sides of the Alas valley, were identified from calls alone as *A. argus*. None of the distinctive calls of *R. ocellata* were heard.

It would seem that Rijkse's bird was misidentified due to the inadequacy of published descriptions of the calls of *R. ocellata*, and this species should therefore not be added to the Sumatran list.

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Two overlooked vagrants from the Tristan da Cunha group

The most recent list of the birds of the Tristan da Cunha group is that of Elliott (1957). He does not mention either the Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula* of the Holarctic or the Dark-billed Cuckoo *Coccyzus melacoryphus* of the Neotropical as vagrants collected there. *C. melacoryphus* is mentioned without comment by Winterbottom (1976) in his report on the Keytel collection. Peringuey (1910: 5), who was Director of the South African Museum, Cape Town, adverts to the Keytel collection and states "there was also procured a South American Cuckoo, that had found its way to Nightingale Island". Peringuey (1924: 8) describes an exhibit of Tristan birds that he had caused to be displayed. He notes with pleasure that the museum has two species not recorded by Wilkins (1923) "1, a South American Cuckoo (*Coccyzus melancoryphus*) and 2, the Ringed Plover (*Aegialitis hyaticola*), accidental importations no doubt".

The 1924 reference to a cuckoo should be read with the 1910 reference, i.e. Keytel obtained a *Coccyzus melancoryphus* on Nightingale Island during his period in the group, which Peringuey (1910) and Winterbottom (1976) give as 1907–1909. This is not the first record of vagrancy by *C. melancoryphus*: it

has also reached the Falkland Islands (Bennett 1937, not 1938 as in Meyer de Schauensee 1966: 137) and it even breeds in the Galapagos Islands. Neither Peringuey (1910) nor Winterbottom (1976) mention *Charadrius hiaticula* in connection with Keytel and his work and we may assume that it was not obtained by him but by someone else a little later in the century.

The record of *Coccyzus melacoryphus* is further support for Rand's (1955) thesis that it is only from the Americas that land birds can be expected to reach the Tristan group. How the seashore frequenting *Charadrius hiaticula* reached the group is uncertain since it is only a vagrant in the Americas south of the Arctic Circle (Meyer de Schauensee 1966).

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The Atlas of Australian Birds: an appeal for data from museum collections

Australia has embarked upon the production of a bird Atlas, organised by the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union and funded by Commonwealth Government grants. This scheme, unlike its British counterpart, aims to determine both the breeding and non-breeding distribution of all Australian birds. The Atlas has been divided into 2 parts: the Field Atlas which records bird distributions for the five years from 1977 until 1981, and the Historical Atlas which aims at recording distributions prior to 1977. Data for the Historical Atlas comes from 3 sources—field notebooks, museum specimens and literature.

Work has already begun on extracting records from these 3 sources, but many early Australian skin and egg collections were taken out of the country and lodged in museums and private collections overseas. We are aware of the Australian specimens in the British, the Royal Scottish and the Cambridge University Museums but feel sure that there are other collections which would be of great value to the Atlas if the information was made available. Preferably, specimens should be labelled and include such details as the date and locality.

Any information on the whereabouts of such collections should be sent (by the end of July if possible) to: Penny Paton, c/o Mr. D. C. Paton, Dept. Ecol. & Evol. Biology, School of Biological Sciences, University of California, Irvine, California 92717 U.S.A.

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